Al Foster Trail

April 7, 2025

	BOTANICAL NAME (with genus pronunciation)	**FAMILY** [CC] = Coefficient of Conservatism	**COMMON NAME** ❀ = **Flowering**
☐	*Aesculus glabra* (ESS-kyoo-luss)	Sapindaceae [CC5]	Ohio Buckeye
☐	*Alliaria petiolata* (al-lee-AYR-ee-uh)	Brassicaceae [introduced]	Garlic Mustard ❀
☐	*Aquilegia canadensis* () (ack-weh-LEE-jee-uh)	Ranunculaceae [CC6]	Red Columbine
☐	*Arabidopsis thaliana* () (uh-rabb-eh-DOPP-sis)	Brassicaceae [introduced]	Thale Cress ❀
☐	*Arisaema triphyllum* (ayr-eh-SEE-muh)	Araceae [CC6]	Jack-in-the-Pulpit
☐	*Arnoglossum atriplicifolium* (awr-no-GLOSS-um)	Asteraceae (Senecioneae tribe) [CC4]	Pale Indian Plantain
☐	*Asimina triloba* (uh-SIM-in-uh)	Annonaceae [CC5]	Pawpaw ❀
☐	*Berberis thunbergii* (BR-br-iss)	Berberidaceae [introduced]	Japanese Barberry
☐	*Buglossoides arvensis* (bug-loss-OY-deez)	Boraginaceae [introduced]	Corn Gromwell ❀
☐	*Campsis radicans* (KAMP-sis)	Bignoniaceae [CC3]	Trumpet Vine / Trumpet Creeper
☐	*Capsella bursa-pastoris* (kap-SELL-uh)	Brassicaceae [introduced]	Shepherd's Purse ❀
☐	*Cardamine concatenata* (kar-DAM-ih-nee)	Brassicaceae [CC4]	Toothwort ❀
☐	*Cardamine hirsuta* (kar-DAM-ih-nee)	Brassicaceae [introduced]	Hairy Bittercress ❀
☐	*Cardamine parviflora* (kar-DAM-ih-nee)	Brassicaceae [CC3]	Small-Flowered Bittercress ❀
☐	*Celtis occidentalis* (SELL-tiss)	Cannabaceae / Rosales [CC3]	Hackberry
☐	*Cercis canadensis* (SR-siss)	Fabaceae (Caesalpinioideae subfam) [CC3]	Redbud ❀
☐	*Chaerophyllum procumbens* (kee-ro-FILL-um)	Apiaceae [CC2]	Wild Chervil ❀
☐	*Claytonia virginica* (klay-TOE-nee-uh)	Montiaceae [CC3]	Spring Beauty ❀
☐	*Clematis terniflora* (kleh-MATT-iss)	Ranunculaceae [introduced]	Sweet Autumn Clematis
☐	*Clematis virginiana* (kleh-MATT-iss)	Ranunculaceae [CC3]	Virginia Clematis
☐	*Collinsia verna* (ko-LINN-zee-uh)	Plantaginaceae [CC7]	Blue-Eyed Mary ❀
☐	*Corydalis flavula* () (kor-RID-uh-liss)	Papaveraceae (Fumarioideae subfam) [CC3]	Pale Corydalis / Yellow Fumewort ❀
☐	*Cruciata pedemontana* () (kroo-shee-AY-tuh)	Rubiaceae [introduced]	Piedmont Bedstraw
☐	*Cubelium* [Hybanthus] *concolor* () ("q"-BELL-ee-um	Violaceae [CC7]	Green Violet
☐	*Delphinium tricorne* (del-FINN-ee-um)	Ranunculaceae [CC6]	Dwarf Larkspur ❀
☐	*Descurainia pinnata* (des-kr-RAY-nee-uh)	Brassicaceae [CC2]	Western Tansymustard
☐	*Draba verna* () (DRAY-buh)	Brassicaceae [introduced]	Spring Whitlowgrass ❀
☐	*Enemion biternatum* (eh-NEE-mee-un)	Ranunculaceae [CC5]	Lowland Rue Anemone ❀
☐	*Euonymus fortunei* (yoo-ONN-i-mus)	Celastraceae [introduced]	Wintercreeper

☐	*Galium aparine* (GAY-lee-um)	Rubiaceae [CC0]	Bedstraw
☐	*Glandularia canadensis* (gland-yoo-LAYR-ee-uh)	Verbenaceae [CC5]	Rose Verbena ❀
☐	*Glechoma hederacea* (gleh-KOE-muh)	Lamiaceae [introduced]	Ground Ivy / Creeping Charlie ❀
☐	*Hasteola suaveolens* (hass-tee-O-luh)	Asteraceae (Senecioneae tribe) [CC9]	False Indian Plantain
☐	*Holosteum umbellatum* () (ho-LOSS-tee-um)	Caryophyllaceae [introduced]	Jagged Chickweed ❀
☐	*Houstonia pusilla* (hew-STO-nee-uh)	Rubiaceae [CC3]	Tiny Bluet ❀
☐	*Hydrangea arborescens* (hy-DRAIN-jee-uh)	Hydrangeaceae [CC7]	Hydrangea
☐	*Hydrophyllum appendiculatum* (hy-dro-FILL-um)	Boraginaceae [CC6]	Great Waterleaf / Woolen Breeches
☐	*Lamium amplexicaule* (LAY-mee-um)	Lamiaceae [introduced]	Henbit ❀
☐	*Lamium purpureum* (LAY-mee-um)	Lamiaceae [introduced]	Purple Dead Nettle ❀
☐	*Lonicera maackii* (lo-NISS-r-uh)	Caprifoliaceae [introduced]	Bush Honeysuckle
☐	*Mertensia virginica* (mr-TEN-see-uh)	Boraginaceae [CC6]	Virginia Bluebells ❀
☐	*Nabalus crepidineus* (NAB-uh-luss)	Asteraceae (Cichorieae tribe) [CC9]	Great White Lettuce / Nodding Rattlesnake Root
☐	*Narcissus pseudonarcissus* () (nar-SISS-us)	Amaryllidaceae [introduced]	Daffodil ❀
☐	*Noccaea* [*Microthlaspi*] *perfoliata* (NOCK-ee-uh)	Brassicaceae [introduced]	Perfoliate Pennycress ❀ and seed
☐	*Opuntia cespitosa* (o-POON-tee-uh)	Cactaceae [CC4]	Eastern Prickly Pear
☐	*Packera glabella* (PACK-r-uh)	Asteraceae (Senecioneae tribe) [CC1]	Butterweed
☐	*Persicaria virginiana* (pr-seh-KAYR-ee-uh)	Polygonaceae [CC1]	Jumpseed / Virginia Knotweed
☐	*Phacelia purshii* (fuh-SEE-lee-uh)	Boraginaceae [CC4]	Miami Mist ❀
☐	*Phlox divaricata* (FLOCKS)	Polemoniaceae [CC4]	Woodland Phlox ❀
☐	*Polygonatum biflorum* (po-LIGG-o-NAY-tum)	Asparagaceae [CC4]	Solomon's Seal
☐	*Polymnia canadensis* (po-LIMM-nee-uh)	Asteraceae (Polymnieae tribe) [CC6]	Whiteflower Leafcup / Whiteflower Bearsfoot
☐	*Potentilla simplex* (po-ten-TILL-uh)	Rosaceae [CC3]	Common Cinquefoil
☐	*Ranunculus abortivus* (ruh-NUN-kyoo-lus)	Ranunculaceae [CC1]	Small-Flowered Buttercup ❀
☐	*Ranunculus hispidus* (ruh-NUN-kyoo-lus)	Ranunculaceae [CC4]	Bristly Buttercup ❀
☐	*Rosa multiflora* (RO-zuh)	Rosaceae [introduced]	Multiflora Rose
☐	*Rudbeckia laciniata* (rood-BECK-ee-uh)	Asteraceae (Heliantheae tribe) [CC4]	Cutleaf Coneflower / Goldenglow
☐	*Sambucus canadensis* (sam-BOO-kuss)	Adoxaceae [CC2]	Black Elderberry
☐	*Sanguinaria canadensis* (san-gwen-AYR-ee-uh)	Papaveraceae [CC5]	Bloodroot
☐	*Saponaria officinalis* (sap-o-NAYR-ee-uh / o-fish-eh-NAY-leez)	Caryophyllaceae [introduced]	Soapwort
☐	*Staphylea trifolia* (staff-ill-LEE-uh)	Staphyleaceae [CC5]	American Bladdernut ❀
☐	*Stellaria media* (steh-LAYR-ee-uh)	Caryophyllaceae [introduced]	Chickweed ❀
☐	*Trillium recurvatum* (TRILL-ee-um)	Melanthiaceae [CC6]	Prairie Trillium ❀

☐	*Trillium viride* (TRILL-ee-um)	Melanthiaceae [CC7]	Wood Trillium / Green Trillium ❀
☐	*Verbascum thapsus* (vr-BASS-kum)	Scrophulariaceae [introduced]	Mullein
☐	*Veronica polita* (vr-RON-nick-uh)	Plantaginaceae [introduced]	Gray Field Speedwell ❀
☐	*Vinca minor* (VINK-uh)	Apocynaceae [garden]	Periwinkle
☐	*Viola eriocarpa* (vy-O-luh)	Violaceae [CC5]	Smooth Yellow Violet ❀
☐	*Viola rafinesquei* (vy-O-luh / raff-in-ESS-kee-eye)	Violaceae [CC0]	Johnny Jump-up / Field Pansy ❀
☐	*Viola sororia* (vy-O-luh)	Violaceae [CC2]	Common Blue Violet ❀
☐	*Viola striata* (vy-O-luh)	Violaceae [CC3]	Striped Creamy Violet ❀

NOTES

WHERE WE WALKED: We met in the "Al Foster Trailhead" parking lot next to Glencoe Park. (As far as parking lots go, this one's rather pleasant. It even has a bench and restrooms.) We began on the Al Foster Trail, but when the railroad tracks veered off towards the left, we followed the tracks instead of the paved trail. Although the tracks carry the lofty name "Wabash, Frisco and Pacific Railroad", it's actually a little 12-gauge railroad that children and steam-locomotive enthusiasts enjoy during the summer months (website HERE). We followed the tracks until we reached the "Rock Hollow Trail", where we made a left. We followed the Rock Hollow Trail past the Virginia Bluebells for a quarter-mile or so before turning back. On the way back we took the paved "Al Foster Trail" instead of the little WF&P Railroad tracks. It was a beautiful walk. We started off in winter coats, but by the time we got back to the cars some were wearing short-sleeves.

WHICH SMALL-FLOWERED BUTTERCUP? Even though they're not exactly pretty, it's kind of a relief to find a small-flowered buttercup because in St. Louis we only have 2 of them to choose from. All we have to do is decide whether it's "*Ranunculus abortivus*" or "*Ranunculus micranthus*". John Oliver showed us that there are 2 features to examine: "stem hair" and "shape of its basal (not stem) leaves". Here's a useful mnemonic:
ABORTIVUS has no stem hair. Think: the hair's been aborted.
MICRANTHUS does have stem hair.
ABORTIVUS has lobed, heart-shaped bases on its basal (not stem) leaves. Think: love cannot be aborted.
MICRANTHUS does NOT have a lobed, heart-shaped base on its basal (not stem) leaves. The base is more rounded.

WHICH SOLOMON'S SEAL? In a few weeks it'll be simple to tell the difference between "Solomon's Seal" (*Polygonatum biflorum*) and "Solomon's Plume" aka "False Solomon's Seal" (*Maianthemum racemosum*) because their flowers develop in very different parts of the plant. Until then, we've got to identify them vegetatively. John Oliver showed us that the easiest way is to check for leaf petioles. Here's a useful mnemonic:
"TRUE Solomon's Seal" has leaves that SEAL against the stem. There is no petiole.
"FALSE Solomon's Seal" is guilty of FALSE advertising. Its leaves DON'T properly seal. They *almost* do, but there's a tiny petiole keeping the leaf from really hugging the stem.
Another lookalike is "Large-Flowered Bellwort" (*Uvularia grandiflora*). But poor Uvularia's stem goes right through the leaf, piercing it. Besides, she's in a different family and is already blooming.)

ZOOLOGICAL FASCINATIONS: Although we call our weekly outings "Botany Walks", it seems that every week we spend more and more time in Kingdom Animalia. It's always time well spent. Here are some of the faunal encounters we had today:

- Somebody found an iridescent Blister Beetle filled with eggs. Ted was surprised that it was found this time of year. He explained that they're usually found in the Fall. Ted went on to explain that this beautiful insect is related to the Spanish Fly.

- Ted turned over a fallen redcedar trunk and found a *Callidium texanum* beetle. Ted explained that these beetles depend on freshly-dead or dying redcedars. Somebody asked if it had a common name. John Christensen quipped "Fred". Everybody laughed. Its common name is a "Black-Horned Juniper Borer"
- We found a large turtle and spent quite some time examining and trying to identify it. John Oliver noticed its large head and suggested that it might be a Northern Map Turtle. When we lifted the turtle to check its underside for any identifying marks, the turtle's huge mouth could be seen in a grimace of extreme agony and grief. We gently put the creature down and wished it a long and happy life.
- John Oliver spotted a "Spring Azure Butterfly" and somebody else noticed a "Zebra Swallowtail Butterfly" flitting around, presumably looking for a pawpaw tree.
- We heard toads, spring peepers, and Leopard Frogs. The Leopard Frogs made a distinctive "laughing" sound that was fun to hear.
- Ted found some metallic-colored Jewel Beetles (*Acmaeodera tubulus*) feeding on dandelion petals.
- Those with binoculars were able to observe Bald Eagles in their nest across the Meramec.
- Burt asked: "Why do flamingos stand on one leg?" When nobody replied he answered his own question: "So they can reach the ground." Everybody tried not to laugh.

SHORT OBSERVATIONS:

- POSTER PLANT: Every place we go there are often certain plants that stand out and become the "representative" of that habitat. Many of us would probably agree that the showstopper for today was the stately "Green Trillium" (*Trillium viride*). Although we were actively looking for it, our group audibly gasped when we saw it for the first time. It was huge. None of us had ever seen such a large Trillium. It was like looking for a pet dog and finding a horse instead.
- PHOTOS: Kathy Bildner, Steve, and June have uploaded some photos for us on our Google Drive (HERE).
- At the end of our walk, when we were back in the parking lot, John Christensen brought over a large 1945 map of the area. It was fun to see how much things have changed in 80 years. Especially interesting was the grid street plan for "Times Beach". (John Oliver explained that it was called "Time Beach" because if you bought a 20 x 100 ft lot for $67.50, you got a 6-month newspaper subscription to the *St. Louis Star-Times*.) Some in our group remembered the name "Russell Bliss", the fellow who had sprayed enough dioxin-contaminated oil to make Times Beach a superfund site. They recalled the "Ignorance is Bliss" gallows humor that was going on back then.

PARTICIPANTS:

There were 20 of us botanists today, who are (in alphabetical order):
Brenda Adams, Gisela Baner, Renee Benage, Kathy Bildner, Jerry Castillon, John Christensen, Wayne Clark, Christine Ellis, Ann Esswein, Karen Gabbert, June Jeffries, Michael Laschober, Ted MacRae, Burt Noll, John Oliver, Ruth Tenbrink, Kathy Thiele, Steve Turner, George Van Brunt, and Laura Yates.